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THE REFORMED THEOLOGICAL REVIEW

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Tradition and the N.T. Canon

Part I — THE PROBLEM

The word "tradition" is in the air of theological discussion today. Behind much of this discussion lies an ecumenical concern, since it is their diverse traditions which divide the churches from one another, and the time seems now to be ripe for churches "to reconsider their traditional attitudes towards tradition."[1] Hence the recent establishing of a W.C.C. Theological Commission to consider "Tradition and Traditions."

The issues raised are enormous and complex. To see this one need only glance at the three chief usages of the word "tradition"; it may designate—

1. The specific article of tradition, the content.
2. The act of "handing down," the method.
3. The living stream of Tradition, the process.

When we raise the question of Christian Tradition we find ourselves forced to deal with problems of historical criticism in the Scriptures and Church History, then dogmatic questions of the Church and its authority in mediating and interpreting Tradition and Scripture; further, we have to clarify the Christian understanding of time, history, hope and eschatology. Almost the whole range of theological studies seems to be involved.

The aim of this paper is the more modest one of seeking to throw light on one particular problem — that of the relation of Tradition to the N.T. Canon. The problem arises in a new form today because Scripture is seen to be bound up essentially with Tradition. Instead of the old polemical antithesis between Scripture and Tradition, Protestant scholars on all sides recognise the Bible as "the Church's book." And within the realm of Biblical studies, historical criticism has led to acceptance of at least the general conclusions of the Form-critics — that oral tradition preceded the written Scriptures and that the latter

1. A. C. Outler, "The Christian Tradition and the Various Christian Traditions," in W.C.C. Division of Studies Bulletin, I, 1955, no. 2, p. 14. An up-to-date bibliography is listed here. See also: K. E. Skydsgaard, "Schrift und Tradition," in **Kerygma und Dogma**, I, 1955, pp. 161-179; A. Richardson and W. Schweitzer (editors), **Biblical Authority for To-day**, 1951, passim.

are to be regarded as the product or deposit of Tradition. In other words, Scripture *is* Tradition. But the question then arises: How can the New Testament any longer be distinguished, as an absolute and authoritative Canon, from later Church Tradition? If all is dissolved into a continuing stream of Tradition running through the history of the Church, where is a line to be drawn? Again, looking at the problem from an ecumenical angle, it may be asked how much common tradition is necessary as a "sufficient basis" for reunion. Would only the full Catholic development of twenty centuries suffice as an authoritative basis for dogma, liturgy and the Church's ministry? Or nine centuries of the Greek Fathers? Or the first five centuries with the great doctrinal decisions of the "undivided Church"? Or simply the Scriptural Canon guarded by the Apostles' Creed and a Confessional statement? But having gone so far, the questioner may be moved to ask why he should stop at this point and adhere only to this — neither more nor less — as absolute and "fundamental"; in the interests of ecumenical fellowship he may be content with a simple general affirmation such as "Christ is Lord."

Seen in this light, both Scripture and Tradition would seem to dissolve into the relativities of historical development; each attempt to delimit a certain section of the stream as "authoritative" has its own difficulties and its own appearance of arbitrariness. This is apparent from an examination of the various confessional attitudes to Scripture and the modern attempts to justify them.

(a) The *Roman Catholic* Church gives an impressive full-scale answer by accepting the priority and supremacy of Tradition and vesting its authority in the living teaching-office of the Church; this is seen in action in the dogmas of Papal Infallibility and of the Assumption of Mary. At first sight this view seems to be able to do justice to the fact of developing Tradition in both Scripture and Church history; it could even use the more conservative conclusions of Protestant form-critics, as did the German Catholic scholar, Joseph Ranft.[2] But it turns out to be inconsistent, for it is a "fundamentalist" position in regard to *both* Scripture and Tradition and the two cannot be always reconciled. The Tradition is said to be both "unchanging" and "developing," and to solve this tension either the historical fact of development in its diversity is smoothed over or there is resort to the subterfuge of "implicit truth." This problem appears in the search for Scriptural proof for new dogmas; Roman Catholic scholars

2. J. Ranft, **Der Ursprung des Katholischen Traditionsprinzips**, Wuerzburg, 1931.

are divided on the question as to whether this is always possible or necessary.

(b) *The Orthodox Church* claims to transmit the fulness of faith because the Holy Spirit dwells in the Church and therefore inspires both Scripture and Tradition, which form thereby a unity.[3] There is a general truth in this position while it remains clad in vague terms, but efforts towards a more concrete precision reveal argument in a circle: the Church *must* always be right because it has the Spirit. This vagueness always results where "Tradition and the Spirit" is the dominant phrase.[4] Similarly for the popular Anglican triad of "Scripture, Tradition and Reason"[5] or "Bible, Church and Spirit."[6] These provide a useful warning against exclusive infallibilities and insofar represent ecumenical facts; but what is important in any situation is the balance of the three elements leading to the expression of a certain type of authority. It is not enough to say, "All are necessary," for we want to know "how much of each," and here we reach an impasse. Our problem concerning the Canon will not be solved along these lines.

(c) The traditional *Reformed* reliance on Scripture as original "witness of the apostles." Oscar Cullmann has sought to repristinate this approach in his interesting work on N.T. Tradition.[7] He would identify the "apostolic" writings with the central event of the Incarnation, thus marking them off from the subsequent Tradition of the "time of the Church." As an historical appeal to the earliest sources this is worthwhile, but as a criterion of the N.T. Canon it does not help us. It is not possible to define with accuracy who among the N.T. authors were apostles and how much of their work was "apostolic"; moreover, the Canon has a long history and cannot be marked off so precisely. Cullmann must know all this as an historical critic, but his prime concern here appears to be the irenic one of finding common ground in his debate with Catholic scholars (who would seek to use Cullmann's time-schema of the Christian plan of Salvation in the service of Catholic Tradition).

(d) The *dialectical theology* representing the dynamic approach of Luther and Karl Barth, emphasises the brute fact of the "given-ness" of Scripture for the Church's life and preaching. Barth himself acknowledges

3. S. Bulgakov, **The Orthodox Church**, 1935, pp. 21-45.
4. Cf. Daniel Jenkins, **Tradition and the Spirit**, 1951.
5. H. E. W. Turner, **The Pattern of Christian Truth**, 1954.
6. J. S. Whale, **Christian Doctrine**, 1940, chap. I.
7. Translated as two essays in the **Scottish Journal of Theology**, 1950, pp. 180-187, and 1953, pp. 113-135.

the historical-critical view of Scripture as human literature, the deposit of Church preaching. But he asserts dogmatically the Protestant Canon-principle: "The Bible constitutes itself the canon," because it invariably imposes itself as such upon the Church.[8] Barth's concern here is that the Church be pointed beyond herself to the gracious Word of God and not lost in a conversation with herself. Hence the Protestant axiom must undercut both Catholicism and Modernism. Granted the need for axioms, we may still ask whether this is the appropriate point for one. Are we not entitled to some reason for limiting the area of the Scriptural Canon? Barth's concern is expressed in a more adequate way by Otto Weber[9] and Hermann Diem,[10] who reject any final criteria from the theoretical side and leave the Canon "open" in principle for Protestants. The canonical Scriptures form a text for preaching Christ and their unity lies only in the personal, historic *(geschichtlich)* unity of God's revelation in the preached Word. Neither historical priority nor a theory of historical development justify the Canon, but only the self-evidence of preaching. The Canon represents not a static, legalistic "objectifiable" weapon for the Church, but "Sola Gratia."

Basically similar is the approach of Rudolf Bultmann, Gerhard Ebeling and Gerhard Gloege.[11] The fundamental Christian *Tradition,* the "Paradosis," is the Kerygma (understood as the dynamic existential proclamation of Jesus Christ, the Gospel in action). This is to be sharply distinguished from the diverse historical *traditions* found in the N.T. Scriptures, which give indirect witness to the central Tradition (equated with Revelation) and are only "paradoxically" related to it. Seen in this light, the limits of the Canon become a matter of comparative indifference; the Canon becomes God's Word only as God's present action. This dialectical principle is radicalised further by Ernst Kæsemann, who sees the Canon as the first stage of Catholicism seeking to objectivise the Gospel in legalistic forms. To the question "Does the N.T. Canon provide the basis of Church unity?"[12] he answers: "No! The N.T. is fragmentary and shot through with diverse tensions and contradictions which give a handle to the multiplicity of denominations. Only the living Word of the Gospel founds the One Church."

8. K. Barth, **The Doctrine of the Word of God,** 1936, p. 120; cf. pp. 300-303.
9. O. Weber, **Dogmatik,** I, 1955, pp. 274-309.
10. H. Diem, **Das Problem des Schriftkanons,** 1952.
11. R. Bultmann, **N.T. Theology, II,** § 54.
G. Ebeling, **Die Geschichtlichkeit der Kirche,** 1954.
G. Gloege, **Offenbarwng und Ueberlieferung,** 1954.
12. E. Kaesemann, **in Evangelische Theologie,** xi, 1951-2, pp. 13-21.

From Barth to Kæsemann the "dialectical theologians" affirm the prior place of the preached Word, the existential Kerygma over historical traditions in the N.T.; hence the contemporary concern for hermeneutics by which the Scriptures may be interpreted so as to speak as "internal" and not merely external history. In this respect, from the standpoint of living Christian faith, their priorities are right. But are they right in what they deny — namely, the relevance of historical criticism for establishing the validity of the N.T. Canon? If the preacher is asked why his message must be based on Scripture, it is scarcely enough to reply: "It just is so — this is how the Kerygma happens!" The Scriptural Canon is a collection of books open to modern historical investigation, and we must be able to explain why we turn to this de-limited collection and not to others. If we are driven to arguing in a circle we must understand why. Our answer must be consonant with the findings of historical criticism which have raised the problem for modern theology; we should be able to use these findings constructively towards a new solution. This does not mean that faith is at the mercy of historical criticism; but it means that for this particular theological issue (which is on the reflective level, at one remove from faith) historical considerations are decisive. The Canon has a history, and scholars who work at this history by investigating the traditions embodied in it[13] assist in a solution of the theological problem. Our problem is: *What could the N.T. Canon mean today in the light of modern historical understanding?* This requires first a study of how the different traditions within Scripture developed and how Tradition was understood within the N.T. Here we shall simply outline the salient points.

Part II — TRADITION WITHIN SCRIPTURE

Tradition is essential to human life as we know it — life which finds expression in culture and depends on the transmission of the cultural heritage through education. And since even in its use of human language religion is always expressed in cultural forms, religion is inseparable from tradition. The course of religious tradition in a society follows generally a simple pattern: at first uncritical acceptance of the tradition, then criticism of it by prophets and thinkers, finally a new refined and self-conscious system of tradition. In the *Old Testament* we see the first two stages, but systematic traditionalism does not arrive

13. E.g. The investigations by C. H. Dodd into Primitive Christian traditions, by Cullmann and by the form-critics in general. W. G. Kuemmel has also provided good studies on Tradition and the Canon.

until later Judaism. The O.T. holds to the central tradition that Yahweh is the living God and Israel His people (through law, prophets and worship). However, the O.T. remains an unfinished book, full of unresolved tensions. Judaism attempted to settle the matter by unifying the whole life and worship of Israel around the Law; the O.T. canon is thus fulfilled in a developing tradition, an expanding web of rabbinical commentary on the Law and a tradition-chain of rabbis in the "legitimate succession." By this means the Pharisees sought, with growing success, to make the O.T. Revelation of God an ever-present reality in the life of the people, a continuing tradition. The *New Testament,* however, sees the fulfilment of this O.T. Revelation elsewhere. It accepts the O.T. canon as a binding constitutive tradition and presupposes throughout the O.T. representation of God's dealings with Man; the N.T. canon itself is modelled on the O.T. pattern. But there is no attempt at continuity by means of strict tradition-chains derived from Israel's past. The continuity lies in the free creative action of the living God.

The history of Tradition as understood in the N.T. writings may now be summarised as follows (following the chronological order of N.T. historical "Introduction"):

(1) *Jesus* was able to break through the web of Torah — tradition which contemporary Judaism was busily weaving. While he respected the religious heritage of his people he would not let it stand in the way of his ministry, for in his own words, work and person, the future Kingdom of God was already at work. It is a creative eschatology which takes precedence over a harmonious tradition-culture. The new future of God's Kingdom pulls men out of the security of their past (whether it be the publican's sin or the Pharisee's Law). The all-decisive factor is now eschatology, the real alternative to traditionalism. All subsequent Christian traditions spring from this irruptive, creative factor. Likewise the bearers of tradition in the N.T. (e.g., disciples and apostles) are first of all eschatological emissaries and not a closed union in a legitimate tradition-chain; the case of Paul shows this clearly.

(2) *Primitive Church traditions* express in various forms the faith of this creative eschatology fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

(a) The "Kerygma" (in Dodd's concrete sense of summary confessions of Christ crucified and risen).
(b) Scripture-proofs for interpreting its significance.
(c) Ethical codes and "catechisms."

(d) Liturgical forms, e.g., the eschatological sacraments of Baptism and Lord's Supper.
(e) Narratives of the ministry of Jesus current before their collection into written Gospels.

These forms of Primitive tradition were diverse and developing, but not merely "floating"; there was "guarded tradition"[14] and it acted as a catalyst to further interest in the work of Jesus.

(3) *Paul* presupposes this diverse tradition material, to which he applies Paradosis-terminology in his epistles. But his Rabbinical touch does not lead him to a new tradition-chain. Paul's view of the Gospel and of his role as apostle is not traditionalist but eschatological; God's grace and righteousness parallel the Kingdom of God. From this central understanding Paul could develop his theology and ethics.

(4) *The Synoptic Gospels* come to fruition in the "post-apostolic age." They presuppose a standpoint of Christian faith and the motives of Primitive tradition. But they trace the historical source of this faith in the ministry of Jesus; because this life expresses a purposeful unity derived from God the coherent narrative proclaims the Gospel.

(5) Under *Post-Apostolic literature* we include the later epistles and writings of the N.T. which reveal certain tensions and one-sided developments. For instance, of the deutero-Pauline works Hebrews emphasises a tradition of prophetic eschatology whereas the Pastorals emphasise the more conservative ecclesiastical side of tradition (the "deposit"). Revelation and II Peter are apocalyptic, while Acts traces the progress of the Christian Kerygma through the course of Church history from Jerusalem to Rome. These writings can be understood in the light of the differing circumstances of the growing Church, expressing partial aspects of the tradition and methods of preserving the traditional faith against "heresy."

(6) The *Gospel of John* uses no tradition-terminology, but there are indications (as is clearly the case with I John) of dependence on Church tradition. John, like Paul, seeks to provide a radical theological interpretation of the data of Revelation and thereby arouse faith and "life" among his Hellenistic contemporaries. But like the Synoptics he casts his Gospel in the form of a narrative. This profound combination of faith and history is the clue to those Paraclete sayings in John 14-16 which promise the Spirit of Truth. These sayings cannot be used to justify

14. A. M. Hunter, **Paul and his Predecessors**, 1940, pp. 23-4.

new doctrines appearing in later Church tradition, for the Spirit is the continuing Witness to Jesus Christ recalling his message and ministry, his Cross and Resurrection to present-day believers. The Farewell discourses thus appeal to Tradition in the sense of an ever-new return to the foundation-facts of Christ which are eternally relevant; eschatology is largely understood as an immediate gift of the Spirit and "eternal life." The result is a creative welding of eschatology and tradition.

Part III

THE N.T. CANON AS A PROCESS OF TRADITION

The above survey indicates the fundamental fact of tradition in the N.T. canon — not only as a "deposit" but as growing and developing tradition, undergoing re-interpretation and new application. The N.T. must be seen as a process of tradition. But we have now to ask after the significance of this process. On the old Protestant view it would be problematic and embarrassing. The traditional arrangement of the N.T. books leading from gospels to epistles and apocalypse seems to make the N.T. "peter out" into Church literature and tradition (as Luther showed in his arrangement of the latter N.T. books); they would be redeemed only by supposed "apostolicity." But historical criticism reveals apostolic authorship to be an empty criterion in fact and we must look elsewhere for reasons why the N.T. canon should come to a conclusion and not merge into the continuing stream of Church tradition. Can we not find a solution from the new traditio — historical arrangement of the N.T. contents? This is a hypothesis to be considered.

The books of the N.T. can be seen historically as developing along the following general pattern: the Pauline epistles (presupposing the Primitive preaching and traditions), the Synoptic gospels, further epistles and post-apostolic literature, and the gospel of John as the latest major N.T. work. It is true that "rough edges" remain (e.g., the probably later epistle, II Peter), as they will for any theory or theology of the Canon. Nevertheless this general pattern stands firm and has this significance: the gospels come not at the beginning of the process but at the conclusion, marking a turning-point in the development of tradition. Tradition from the Primitive Church is what comes first, and its Kerygma, worship, ethical and O.T. traditions are presupposed in the Pauline theology and ethics. Only *subsequently* do coherent gospel-narratives appear; but then they direct the tradition-process back to

its once-for-all historical source in Jesus Christ, the original eschatological Event who brings the finality of God's Kingdom. The gospels thus exercise a delimiting influence on the process. Instead of a progressive line of development into the ever-growing webs of Church tradition (or into the ether of Gnostic mythology), the N.T. Canon brings the line back to its ultimate source. It presents us not with an ever-extending ribbon but with a *circle* of tradition, a self-consistent process which inshrines the finality of its own starting-point. For the Church to accept these N.T. writings as a normative Canon means that she must live within this circle and re-live its pattern — not by slavish imitation but by a creative re-appropriation of its contents.

This hypothesis will not solve problems of detail; its function is simply to provide a general basis for the authority of the Canon, indicating the reason for a delimited Canon of N.T. books and their continuing relevance for the Church's life. The hypothesis needs to be tested from all angles of the Church's history, theology and practice. Meanwhile, the following considerations may be adduced in its favour:

(1) The *creative centre* of the N.T. is seen in the eschatological Kerygma, proclaiming Jesus as the Christ who is final for faith. Without this Kerygma and this faith there is no sense in talking of a normative Canon. Hence the outsider sees only a collection of traditional Christian writings but with no central theme. Hence also the confused position, in relation to the Canon, of Roman Catholicism which does not take the eschatological element seriously. But an eschatological Jesus is Alpha and Omega, and the cycle of N.T. writings witnesses to his finality in a variety of ways.

(2) *The diversity of N.T. traditions* is acknowledged on this basis without artificial attempts at harmonisation. There is actually no unified theology of tradition in the N.T., but only the fact of traditions being handed on and developed, with occasional injunctions. The unifying factor in this diversity is not any specific method or content of tradition but the source and subject, Jesus Christ, the creative centre.

(3) *The N.T. is seen as the Church's book*, the cycle of traditions which provide a continuing "liveable basis" for the Church. The prime function of the Canon is not one of fighting off the encroachments of later Church tradition as inferior "traditions of men" but that of being *used* in the Church's whole life. It is not "Exhibit A" in the

Church's time-line, but rather a dynamic leaven at work creatively in the Church. If the Church is really re-living the pattern of the N.T. Canon she will be seeking to understand the different types of tradition-literature in the N.T. and to reinterpret them for her present-day hearers, leading on from one stage to another so that the variety of the Church's life may be experienced by all. The Kerygma of salvation through Jesus Christ must be preached ever anew to 20th century Man, who must be led on to apprehend the Church's doctrinal and ethical norms, her liturgy and use of the Scriptures. The believer needs some coherent instruction in theology and ethics if his faith is to take shape in everyday life. He also needs a knowledge of his background in Church history and of his Church organisation. But when all these traditions have been imparted he must be brought back again and again to the historical and eschatological Jesus, the source of all the traditions. And so the cycle of the Canon can be re-lived. Naturally this cannot be used as a strict scheme of Church instruction, but only as the basis for continual growth, into the fulness and diversity of the Canon. The point is that, wherever the Christian may start from in the cycle, he should be led on eventually through the whole. (In this connection it is worth noting the traditional order of Scripture-readings in the lectionary: O.T., then N.T. Epistle and Gospel. With the Gospel, the N.T. Canon puts an eschatological "full-stop" to the Church's tradition and liturgy. Preaching and sacraments can be only re-presentation of the eschatological event — the preaching in an "existential" form, the sacraments in a traditional rite.) In all these ways the Church re-lives the Canon, its vital norm, and Church History itself becomes the exposition of Scripture (as Ebeling puts it in the hermeneutic context). Our hypothesis concerning the Canon thus shows the hermeneutic relevance of the fact of developing Tradition within the N.T.; it may be called a bridging of the gap between "historical introduction" to the N.T. and N.T. interpretation in the contemporary scene.

(4) Finally, the N.T. Canon, viewed thus, provides a *"liveable basis" for ecumenical fellowship.* The old all-or-nothing polemic created a sterile opposition between Scripture and Tradition and the illusion that one could exist without the other. We can avoid the illusion and preserve the insight of both Catholic and Protestant theology if we recognise that Church tradition is inescapable but that it fulfils itself truly only in the process of re-living the Canon. Scripture itself is tradition, but

a constitutive tradition which provides room for *growth together* of the various denominations. Unity is achieved not by an initial agreement on doctrine and practice but by the willingness to grow together in the common search for a renewed understanding of the whole N.T. Canon. And as the Canon is a dynamic process of tradition, so must be the process of re-living it; but it involves continual conversion and growth by return to the source and centre, Jesus Christ. And so it has been with Christians in every age.

A. C. MOORE.

Christology and Revelation

(Continued from Vol. XV, No. 3, p.89)

b. When we leave the O.T. statements and come to those in the N.T. we find that there is but the one example of revelation of the triadic type: Mt. 11:27 = Lk. 10:22. The other example given in our original enumeration of the texts involves the dyadic relation of a foreordained Christ being revealed to believers in these last times. We shall concern ourselves only with the former example for, while the latter might be conformed to a triadic pattern by a demonstration that the foreordained Christ is revealed by God to believers, yet the situation here contemplated is different in type from the previous one. Of Mt. 11:27 = Lk. 10:22 we may say that it has a *prima facie* claim to conform to the formula which we have constructed on the O.T. evidence. If we insert the values in the formula which our text suggests then we have some such proposition as this: "By his life of unparalleled perfection, by his death in sacrifice for men, by his resurrection in power, Jesus Christ reveals the mercy, love and goodness of God the Father to Christian believers." If this proposition commends itself to us we may feel justified in regarding as valid the extension of the O.T. formula of revelation to the revelation of God in Jesus Christ recorded in the N.T.

For my own part I am deeply suspicious of a too facile and unthinking extension of the formula in this way. Such extension of it has led to confusion both in the presentation of the N.T. revelation and in the evaluation of the O.T. revelation. This suspicion has two grounds:—

(a) The first is a point of exegesis solely. Is Christ here thinking of the believer as coming to an apprehension of God the Father through an examination of His, that is Christ's life, death and resurrection? Is he not rather picturing himself as the person who, as it were, introduces the believer to the Father? Alternatively does He not mean

that the believer who comes fully to know Him will also know the Father?

(b) Secondly because of the paucity of the N.T. statements on Jesus Christ as the revelation of God it is unwarrantable, if not actually impossible, to construct any general conception of revelation on the basis of isolated assertions and of the pattern which they evince; it becomes necessary then in the absence of the documented evidence such as the O.T. supplies to approach the analysis of the N.T. conception by comparing and contrasting the knowledge acquired through faith with the elements we have already delineated within the O.T. knowledge of God. It is rather surprising that Jesus Christ who is claimed by Christians of whatever creed or theology or denomination as the unique and supreme revelation of God should be so rarely described in this fashion in the N.T. This fact must put us keenly on our guard both against conforming Him to the O.T. formula and against employing without warrant such N.T. evidence as we have. The analysis might proceed along some such lines as follows:—

(i) It must by this time be obvious that if the concept of revelation is to be retained for the description of Jesus Christ despite the lack of N.T. evidence, then some triadic pattern is inevitable. Revelation is always revelation of someone by something (or someone) to someone. We might however be prepared to abandon some such description of Christ but the problem immediately arises of finding some other which does not subtly reintroduce the same conception. If we do abide by the description of Him in revelational terms then we might well be obliged to indicate why the N.T. has departed from a line of description of God's relation with men so prominent in the O.T. If on the other hand we abide by the triadic concept our problems will be to discover what values are to be inserted in the proposition "A reveals B to C," and to discuss more precisely how A is related to B.

(ii) When we compare our previous analysis of the faith situation with the more recent analysis of the revelation formula the very first difference which strikes us is that the former is a dyadic relation while the latter is triadic. This difference may seem at first to preclude the faith situation from being also one in which revelation takes place, and it may easily account for the omission of the concept of revelation from the N.T. It will certainly prepare us for a slightly different type of analysis when we examine such a statement as "Jesus Christ is the revelation of God."

(a) Arresting as the difference is, we need not however be deterred by it from going on to the application of the concept of revelation to the faith situation. What faith regards in the immediacy of the faith situation as a dyadic relation may well for the contemplative reflection of Christology be a triadic relation. It is not infrequently the case that what is simple for faith is complex for theology or Christology, simple but not necessarily easy to believe or straightforwardly verifiable; for example, faith may state simply that Jesus Christ has overcome the world; that statement is simple but it is not easy to believe nor is it the kind of statement which could be established by logical deduction or induction or yet by appeal to history. Faith makes the simple assertion that all things work together for good to them that love God, but the assertion is neither always easy to believe nor yet is it by any means open to exact empirical verification. When then faith appears to deal with a simple dyadic situation we may well be obliged to say that in fact the situation in which faith finds itself is really triadic.

(b) We might indeed seem to have prepared the way for a triadic analysis by our previous emphasis on the mediated character of faith's immediacy, but it is necessary to make it quite clear that the three terms with which we dealt in our analysis of the faith situation were Jesus Christ, the media, namely the written words of Scripture, and the Christian believer; but the existence of the media was not allowed in our analysis to obscure the immediacy.

(iii) As a preface to our application of the triadic concept of revelation to the faith situation we may recapitulate the relevant facts which make that application possible.

(a) Christ's claim to stand in an unique relation to the Father is validated in faith's experience of Him. The authority with which He speaks concerning the intimacy of their relationship faith recognises as being justly asserted. For in knowing Him faith's acquaintance with the Father is *ipso facto* deepened and widened at least, if we shall not be prepared to say revolutionised.

This validation of course will not rest upon the authenticity of a single text but upon the totality of faith's experience of God through Jesus Christ as that experience is initiated and sustained by the means of Holy Scripture.

(b) Faith is also conscious at one and the same time that the gifts which Christ offers in His own name and by His own authority are such as could be offered only by God Himself; the word of forgiveness which faith receives

from Jesus Christ is the word which only God could speak, for no man dare forgive another his sins, sins being a defiance of God and only therefore to be forgiven by God; faith is conscious of no incongruence when Christ speaks the word of pardon. So too the demands which Christ makes are made equally in His name and in the Father's, demands of absolute obedience, demands covering the totality of our existence; faith submits to these demands acutely aware that failure to fulfil them is at the same time failure to do the will of God, and that obedience to them is an exaltation of the Son justified by the uniqueness of his relation to the Father.

(c) Accordingly faith in Jesus Christ implies the presence of God in Jesus Christ which is not paralleled in any way in the other situations in which from time to time men have said God is present. For example, no gift is made to men by other revelations of God; if a gift comes to men through these revelations it is a gift from God. No demand either is made by other revelations upon men. The drying up of the Red Sea, or the firmaments, do not, even allowing for the will of God demonstrated in them, come to us with any demand. It is this dissimilarity between the revelation of God in Jesus Christ and the revelation of Him in other situations which is at the root of all assertions of the divinity (or deity) of Jesus Christ. The fact is alternatively stated by saying that in the faith situation the believer is aware that in having to do with Christ whether in receiving his gift or submitting to his demand, he has *ipso facto* to do with God. It is to the specification of this dissimilarity that we now proceed.

(iv) The facts above cited make it necessary for us to have two formulae rather than one to cover the full implications of the revelation of God to the believer in Jesus Christ. Let us state them first and then proceed to their elucidation.

F1. x(A) reveals AB to C.
F2. AB reveals EB to C.

Elucidation of F1

(a) x(A) has a connotation somewhat similar to that given it in our original formula. A by itself would represent the human life of Jesus Christ as it is open for inspection by the non-Christian historian and philosopher. But the presence of x in the symbol x(A) indicates that to have a place within the revelation formula, that life, A, as apprehended by the non-Christian historian and philosopher, must be regarded as the bearer of a significance which is supra-human and non-inspectable except by faith. x(A)

alone does not specify what exactly that significance is, but rather as we said before poses a question which is answered by AB. It is an incomplete symbol indicating that a relationship exists and nominating one of the relata.

(b) Concerning AB we must observe first of all the difference of symbol from that to which we became accustomed in our analysis of O.T. revelation, namely y(B). By the latter we intended that God revealed Himself under one or other of His attributes. AB signifies that in the revelation of God in Jesus Christ God reveals *Himself*, not under one or other specific attribute but Himself under the limitations, or within the possibilities, of human nature, or rather *a* human nature. Admittedly this revelation will be in terms of attributes; it is impossible for God to be apprehended by C except as a loving God, a merciful God, a just God, and so on. (Compare our previous investigation of non-descriptive acquaintance.) These attributes will be apprehended insofar as they accommodate themselves to certain specific situations. (Such accommodation need not imply any kenosis of course.)

F1 by itself however does not do full justice to the facts in the faith situation cited under (iii) in the preface to this present analysis. According to F1, C might discover God in the character of certain great saints and heroes imbued with the spirit of Christ, yet from none of them does C receive the gift which he receives from Christ, nor does he seek to fulfil their commands with the absolute obedience which he displays to Christ. While then F1 covers those revelations of God which are given to us through noble Christian personalities, F2 both embodies the uniqueness of the Christ revelation and accounts for the previously-mentioned facts of gift, demand, forgiveness and worship.

Elucidation of F2

AB we know already to symbolise the fact that God reveals Himself within the bounds of a human historical character.

EB draws attention to the fact that it is God's essential nature, E, that is revealed to C in AB.

The following comments may be made on F2:—

(a) It covers C's assurance that in knowing AB he also knows EB, that in having to do with Christ he has to do with God Himself. The God who is the God and Father of Jesus Christ will not be other than Jesus Christ either in being or nature. C then has no longer to be content with knowing only the effects of God as Thomas Aquinas

would have him be content, the effects which require reasoned argument to bring C to a knowledge to their Cause.

(b) Since AB reveals EB to C, then C knows that further knowledge of EB will only be achieved through a more adequate understanding of AB. C is then aware of the significance of the claim for the once-for-allness of the revelation of God in Jesus Christ and will be unable to turn away from AB to discover EB elsewhere.

(c) Since EB is revealed through AB, C will find EB in the complexity of AB. At no point in his investigations will C be able to say that he has discovered all that he requires to know of EB in AB, and forthwith concern himself only with the B of AB. Within the formula B only appears as AB, a feature of the formula which safeguards the Christian against unfruitful excursions into mysticism which cut loose from historical starting-points and seek to achieve an unmediated immediate acquaintance with God.

(d) The formula illustrates why it is that the Christian believer can without fear of idolatry give to Christ the worship which God alone claims. C may well worship AB because of the presence of B in AB which is consubstantial with the B in EB.

The fuller description of the relation of the B in AB to the B in EB would lead us into the dogmatic discussion of the essence and the persons. That we have reached this point from our investigation of the faith situation demonstrates how closely the doctrine of the Trinity is related to the faith life of the Church. It demonstrates too that the doctrine originated not in metaphysical curiosity but in the living situation of Christian believers who discovered that through Scripture they had become acquainted with one who offered to them God's gifts and God's demands in His own name and was nevertheless a historical being with human attributes and qualities.

(e) While allowing that the relation of B in AB to B in EB takes us straight into the Trinitarian discussion we may meantime make more explicit the structure of F2. It will be recalled that we have regarded the first symbol in each of our revelation formulae as posing a question answered in the second. That structure here recurs. AB raises the question of whether the God with whom we are confronted there is God as He is in Himself. EB replies that He is.

AB is not identical with EB otherwise there would be no revelation. EB we know to be a spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable; AB insofar as A is a real human being

has a body which is finite and changeable. Accordingly to say AB is identical with EB is to preclude the possibility of revelation from the start.

If we wish to have another form of the question which AB poses we could say that AB symbolises God the Son existing in the flesh and that Sonship being one of the two relata in the Father-Son relationship raises the question of who is the Father. The reply of EB is that God is His Father.

(v) These are the terms in which I should maintain the divinity, or if you wish the deity, of Jesus Christ. I should regard His divinity not as an implication of the doctrine of the Trinity arrived at by purely rationalistic argument from non-empirical premises, but rather as itself following from the inner nature of the faith situation and in turn conditioning the possibility of any formula of any doctrine of the Trinity. His divinity I would base neither solely upon textual excerpts from Scripture as was thought possible by the old proof-text theologians, nor as necessitated by the character of a psychological experience without media. I should regard it as implicit in the faith situation as conditioning and sustaining it but should add that it achieves definite articulation when the facts afforded by that situation are made the basis of an investigation into the nature of the revelation of God which we have in Jesus Christ. In other words the analysis of the nature of revelation in the specifically Christian sense of the term is itself an analysis of the divinity of Jesus Christ.

(vi) F2 provides within itself the problem with which our third thesis will concern itself, namely what exactly is meant by AB? How is A related to B, or B to A, and AB to EB? Our previous discussion has shown to us the frame of mind in which we must approach the third thesis. This discussion has shown us that we begin the investigation from the complexity AB which is a fact within the revelation situation; the issue for our next thesis is not "Can the human and the divine be united in one single person?" but "Given that there is such a person, how can we define the relation of the two within Him?" "Must both suffer through their being conjoined?" The question, that is, is not one of "that" but of "how."

(vii) It will be recalled that at the outset of this analysis of the concept of revelation, we said that while this problem is among the acutest for contemporary theology, few of the theologians who write on the subject have troubled to investigate the precise implications of the concept, and that there can even be found among them

contradictory assertions concerning God's method of revealing Himself. It is necessary, in order to save our previous analysis from being a mere academic and abstract incursion into symbolism, to relate it to several present-day theological assertions. By so doing we shall be better able to vindicate this analysis and to arrive at an understanding of how the previously-mentioned contradictions have arisen.

A. *A. M. FAIRWEATHER*

The Word as Truth, page 7.

(1) "God cannot reveal Himself by His pure presence."

(2) "Revelation cannot therefore direct our understanding to God Himself, and quite alone."

(3) "God manifests Himself only in and through what is not Himself, as God in continuity with some reality which we can perceive."

Statements 1 and 3

If we apply our previous formulae to statements 1 and 3 we see how exactly the latter illustrate the former; It is in x(A), the physical happenings at the Red Sea, the firmaments above the Psalmist, the sunset whose beauty we perceive, the historical happenings of the life and death of a man called Jesus, His powerful authoritative teaching and the quality of His moral life — it is in these things, things which in themselves are not God Himself, that God reveals Himself.

Fairweather's point of view may alternatively be taken as an illustration of the mediated immediacy of faith's knowledge of God. The media are those things or events which are not God, yet it is in and through them that faith comes to know God. Faith of this kind never becomes sight, God does not reveal His pure presence, that is in unmediated immediacy. By that way lies mysticism and while it is claimed often for mysticism that it has a face to face knowledge of God, it is to be doubted whether even here there is a total absence of media. What has most probably happened has been this — that for the mystic the immediacy of God's presence has been so overpoweringly real that he has become almost unconscious of the media. Whether the experience could be maintained were they completely absent is another question; the elaborate methods which the mystics have from time to time employed to induce the experience rather suggests that even for them the media are not entirely negligible.

Statement 2

It is however difficult to follow Fairweather when in Statement 2 he says that revelation cannot direct the understanding to God Himself and quite alone. We may make the following comments upon this assertion of his:—

(a) The statement seems to be a misstatement of the nature of revelation. Surely revelation is the name ascribed to the total situation in which the understanding *is* directed to God Himself. The situation as we saw, involves A, B and C; it appears to me to border on the meaningless to say that this total situation directs our understanding to anything. What is there beyond the situation to which we should desire to be directed? Understanding is involved insofar as C is present, God Himself is within the situation as B, accordingly to deny that the total situation directs the understanding to God Himself is the denial of a confusion of thought.

(b) Fairweather may mean by "revelation" the x(A) of our formula, that is, he may be abstracting one element within the total revelation situation and calling it "revelation," (Cf. Barth when he says that the concept of revelation involves revealer, revelation and revealedness) but even allowing that this sense of revelation is intended by Fairweather, I should have thought that if x(A) equals revelation then it is precisely to God Himself that the understanding is directed. Without such direction no revelation at all would have taken place.

(c) It might be pointed out that Fairweather adds to the words "to God Himself" the words "and quite alone." What can we make of these last three words?

(i) They may serve as an explanation of "to God Himself" which would then be taken to mean "to God by Himself," that is unrelated to mankind, quite alone and apart from the created order. The whole sentence would then be a denial that in revelation the understanding is brought into contact with a God who is out of all relation to the world and man, someone akin to Aristotle's unmoved mover of the spheres, or the Platonic One. But if the sentence intends such a denial it is rather pointless, for in using the very word "revelation" we have by implication denied that God remains unrelated to the world and quite alone.

(ii) On the other hand Fairweather may be denying that in revelation the believer comes to understand God's essential nature as He is in and for Himself. If so his denial is either platitudinous or dangerous. It is platitudinous if he thereby intends that through revelation we

do not come to know God as God is Himself. It is dangerous if he is denying that through revelation we come to know, in part at least, God's essential nature. The God who manifests Himself is surely essentially the same and of the same nature as the God who is quite alone — for example, before human beings populated the earth and could be the recipients of revelation.

If then we were to pass any criticism on Fairweather's assertion we should have to say that while he has done full justice to the "other-than-God" character of x(A) he has not emphasised the place of y(B) or AB in either of our formulae. That is he has not drawn attention sufficiently to the fact that it is God that is known through the other-than-God.

This assertion of his is incidentally a very strange one for he has certainly spoken in the rest of his book of the immediacy of knowledge of God.

JOHN McINTYRE.

(To be concluded)

Book Reviews

DAS TAUSENDJAEHRIGE REICH

By Hans Bietenhard (Zwingli-Verlag, Zürich), 1955, pp. 174; Fr. 15.10.

The author is known to the English reader through an article on the Millenial Hope in the Early Church (1953) which was published in the Scottish Journal of Theology, vol. 6:1. The present volume (a revised edition of a thesis originally published in 1945) also deals with the subject of the Millenium, but on a more ambitious scale. The work is introduced as "a study in Biblical Theology." Bietenhard sets himself the task to co-ordinate the isolated passage concerning the Millenium (Apc. 19.11-20.10) with the more dominant themes of Biblical eschatology.

In the history of the Church the idea of the Millenium soon became an embarrassment, and its eschatological interpretation fell into the hands of heretics and sectarians. This diffidence towards an eschatological interpretation of the Millenium was shared by the Reformers, and Protestant theologians after them have generally refused to make room for the idea of the Millenium in their systematic accounts of the Christian Faith. Bietenhard challenges this practice as a responsible scriptural theologian. He is not a sectarian or chiliast criticising the Church, nor does he belong to that disreputable clan of freelancing theologians who are known as "students of prophecy"; he is a member of the Protestant faculty of divinity in the University of Berne.

Bietenhard firmly links the idea of the Millenium to the concept of the kingship of Christ. Seen in this light the Millenium appears as a period of transition from this aion to the coming aion during which the kingship of Christ increasingly manifests itself here on earth (though not in the manner of the activist utopia of the believer in progress). And since kingship and Church belong together, the Millenium appears as a church-historical period, not, however, in the past or present (as in the traditional "church-historical interpretation" of Apc. 20), but in the future.

The book is full of exegetical and historical interest. If it disappoints in spite of it, it is due to its Biblicism. In refusing the services of philosophy it kills theology, and so what was advertised as a study in Biblical theology degenerates after all into a study of Biblical exegesis. Bietenhard's angry outburst against Bultmann cannot obscure the real strength of Bultmann's theology. It engages the modern believer theologically and religiously while Bietenhard merely offers him mythology and "Geschichtsspekulation." Perhaps, the thought categories of modern man are theologically more relevant, after all, than Bietenhard cares to admit.

The concluding remarks do not wish to detract from the merit of Bietenhard's book; they rather indicate a different point of view. The author has courageously and conscientiously attacked a problem that too many think they can ignore. The book will be read with profit by all who appreciate the author's challenge to take the implications of scriptural theology seriously and not to rest content with a prejudged doctrinal position.

H. H. REX.

ST. JOHN'S GOSPEL: A COMMENTARY

By R. H. Lightfoot; edited by C. F. Evans (Oxford University Press, London), 1956, pp. XII-368; 54/6 (Aust.).

This work of the late Dr. Lightfoot is one to which your reviewer wishes to give quite unstinted praise, as a theological and religious

commentary on the text of the gospel. It was originally planned as a book in the Clarendon Series, and therefore prints the Revised Version; hence it is a different sort of book from Barrett's commentary, which goes into full detail and deals with all the critical questions in so critical a way that one feels that any point which Barrett assents to may be accepted with some confidence. But Lightfoot's book far outgrew the limits of space imposed on the Clarendon series. He made use of Hoskyns' great book, and of Dr. Dodd's articles on St. John which appeared prior to the publication of his big book on the gospel; but it is his own personal contribution that makes his book valuable. As he left the commentary on the text almost complete, his editor, Christopher Evans, had far less to do to it than Noel Davey had in editing Hoskyns; but the Introduction had to be pieced together from a number of papers which Dr. Lightfoot had not put together in a completed form.

The critical questions are treated somewhat lightly. There is only a brief discussion of the authorship; while direct apostolic authorship is not excluded, it is made plain that the Evangelist was one who could "move with the times," and was deeply versed in contemporary Hellenistic thought. Of Westcott's commentary he says that in it "no less than 32 out of 97 pages of Introduction were given to the first section which deals with authorship, while the question for what readers the gospel was designed receives no special treatment"; but modern discussion deals rather with "the structure of the book itself, the problem of the Evangelist's milieu, and his relation both to the religious and philosophical thought of his own time, and to the traditions outlined in other books of the New Testament" (p. 7).

Like other recent commentators, he rejects theories of the dislocation of the order of the chapters. Thus St. John intended that ch. 5 should precede ch. 6, for this reason above all, that the Christological teaching of ch. 5 is necessary if the reader is to understand ch. 6. Yet various passages in ch. 7 refer back to ch. 5; and he suggests that "it is a characteristic of St. John, when he has passed from one occasion to a later similar occasion, to disregard the interval of time which has elapsed meanwhile, and to take up the teaching or controversy of the previous occasion as though the original hearers were still present' (p. 10).

Gardner Smith in his *Saint John and the Synoptic Gospels* sought to prove that this gospel contains no reference to the earlier gospels. Lightfoot firmly rejects this contention; he notes repeatedly how close St. John and St. Mark stood to each other. While St. Matthew may have thought that his gospel would supersede St. Mark's, St. John could never have thought that his work would supersede the Synoptists; he would have realised "the great danger of one-sidedness" if this should have happened. In fact, "when he wrote, the position of the earlier gospels in the Church was strong enough to avert any danger" of this happening. "It seems to me that St. John's gospel, considered by itself, is a riddle; but that if it is regarded as the crown and completion of our gospel records, it falls forthwith into its place" (p. 32).

The commentary on the text is the work of the most conscientious of scholars, and is full of the deepest wisdom and insight. Of the respect in which he was held in Oxford among his old pupils and colleagues, the volume of *Studies in the Gospels* (ed. Nineham) is a monument. I have space here only for one instance of his treatment of the text, that of the Trial before Pilate. Here Pilate is seen as the representative of the civil power, whose authority is of God (19:11);

he is confronted with the Jews, who, as we have been shown already, esp. in ch. 8, have become indentified with "the world" and yielded themselves to the Evil One; and he is confronted with our Lord. He begins his conduct of the case well (18:29-35); but when he inquires into the nature of the Kingship which our Lord is held to claim, and is told that His is a spiritual Kingdom resting on Witness to the Truth (18:36-37), he shirks the whole issue, when he says "What is truth?" The immediate result is that he finds himself involved in releasing a convicted criminal, and punishing One whom he believes to be innocent (18:38-40). After this he is forced, stage by stage, to yield to the Jewish demand; till at last they, having called on the civil power to judge a religious issue (19:7), acknowledge Caesar's absolute authority (19:15). Consequently the civil power, when it refuses to face the issue of truth, cannot prevent itself from becoming the tool of "the world," and Jesus is crucified (pp. 309-316).

GABRIEL HEBERT, S.S.M.

THE PAULINE VIEW OF MAN

By W. David Stacey (Macmillan, London), 1956, pp. 253; 41/6 (Aust.).

This book forms the substance of a thesis presented to the University of Birmingham for the degree of M.A. It is concerned with two distinct problems, the meaning of the various terms for man's nature and functions in Paul, and the origin of Paul's thought. The second of these two is tackled first. The author finds that Paul owed much to the Old Testament and little to the Rabbis. The question of Hellenistic influence is not so easy. Hellenism had influenced Judaism to a greater extent than is commonly realised, and Paul was thus familiar with some Hellenistic concepts. But he "gained nothing from the great men of letters" of Greece.

Mr. Stacey then proceeds to give a very valuable summary of the Greek view of man, and follows it with an equally valuable epitome of the Hebrew view of man, dealing in turn with the Old Testament, the Apocrypha and the Rabbinic writings. Having now thoroughly prepared the way he examines a number of concepts in the Pauline writings, namely, Soul, Spirit, Natural and Spiritual, Flesh, Spirit and Flesh, Body, Heart, Mind, Conscience, and the Inward Man. Every one of these concepts is treated in a careful and sane way. In each chapter much is summed up in a short space, and this book will remain a useful work to refer to.

Of the conclusions reached, the most important is that Paul's Christian experience is decisive. He is indebted a great deal to his Jewish background, and he is not insensible to the contributions of Greek thought. But from the time of the Damascus road on he was a Christian, and all his thinking is shaped by that fact. He makes use of Jewish terms often and Greek terms not so often to express his faith. But the faith he expresses is neither Judaism nor Hellenism but something radically new. Essentially Paul sees man as the Hebrews saw him, as a totality. He explains aspects of this totality from Greek concepts. But "Paul broke away from Jew and Greek because he had realities to describe that had not been presented to any of his predecessors."

This book then does not set out to present us with anything of a revolutionary character. But it does give a careful, exact, and scholarly review of important aspects of Pauline teaching, and for that we are all greatly in Mr. Stacey's debt.

LEON MORRIS.

THEOLOGISCHE ERKENNTNISLEHRE. VERSUCH DOGMATISCHER PROLEGOMENA

By Hendrik van Oyen (Zwingli-Verlag, Zürich), 1955, pp. 244; Fr. 14.50.

This "Theological Epistemology" with the modest sub-title "An attempt at Dogmatic Prolegomena" is another hopeful sign of that great awakening of dogmatic studies which began with Karl Barth's Commentary on Romans in 1919 and which since has influenced the whole of Protestantism, and has become a challenge even to Roman theology. It is certainly no easy task to teach theology at Basel side by side with Barth. Prof. van Oyen, however, holds, as this outstanding book shows, his own as an independent disciple of his great master and colleague. He brings a fresh impetus to dogmatic studies from Dutch theology which is comparatively unknown to other churches except for its traditional interest in comparative religion and missions. Half the book comprises chapter I, "Orientation," which deals with "The Task of Theology," "Theology and Religions," "Theology as a Science," "Dogma and Dogmatics," "Dogmatics and Apologetics," "The Task of Dogmatic Prolegomena." The "prolegomena" proper, as contained in Ch. II ("Unfolding") want to show the character of the Christian faith as a phenomenon *sui generis* wrought by the Holy Spirit and implying a certain knowledge (*Erkenntnis*). Just as Christ is man, the Word a book, so faith is experience" (p. 116). Section A of this chapter (117-71) deals in several paragraphs with "The Revelation in Christ," B with man as "mandatary" of God (the "old" and the "new" man) (172-209), C with the Holy Spirit and His work (210-29), while the brief Ch. III "Epilegomena" gives a concluding paragraph on "Faith and Knowledge" (*Glaube und Erkennen*) (230-36). Every reader will be impressed by the spirit of impartiality and humility with which the author approaches one of the most difficult tasks of a theologian, namely, to justify dogmatics as the core of theology. He sees the danger of theology becoming a sort of esoteric gnosis within the church (p. 16) and realises with K. Jaspers that pride and fanaticism, so often connected with dogmatic thinking inside and outside the church may impair the concept of truth (71). Yet he demonstrates convincingly the necessity of dogmatics as the presupposition of all true preaching, the function of *dogma* being the establishment of agreement between the *kerygma* of the Church and the *revelation* of God as given in Holy Scripture (70). This books shows again that the renaissance of dogmatics in modern theology has its roots not in any speculative interests of some incurable theoretical thinkers on the European continent, but rather in the most serious practical problem which confronts the church, in the one great vital question of the preacher which is not: *"How* shall I cry" in order to be heard by *men?*, but rather *"What* shall I cry" Is. 40:6) as *God's* messenger? As soon as this question is seriously asked, the objective, dogmatic character of the biblical kerygma, even of the preaching of Jesus Himself, becomes evident (67).

The main problem to be answered by the Prolegomena of dogmatics is the question: What is God's revelation, and where is it to be found? As a Reformed theologian van Oyen can find it in Scripture only. In interpreting the biblical revelation he seeks to avoid the dangers of a relapse into the *analogia entis* of a *theologia naturalis* on the one hand, and of the dissolution of the dogmatic substance in a mere existentialist interpretation of Scripture on the

other. The criticism of Bultmann's "de-mythologisation" and his attempt to understand the N.T. kerygma as a mere interpretation of man's existence belongs to the best ever written on that problem. Over against the *analogia entis* (this term has been coined, as far as we know, by E. Przywara, S.J., to denote the Catholic understanding of revelation on the basis of the scholastic, especially Thomistic, doctrine of the *analogia* between God and man which makes it possible for man to know of God) the author rejects the ontology of Aquinas as canonised by modern Catholicism. The "I AM" of Ex. 3:14 which resounds in the self-predications of Jesus does not mean "I am," "I exist" in the sense of Greek ontology. It rather means: "I am there" in the sense of the personal presence of Him who speaks to man, comes to man. The pages 117ff. where the biblical counterpart to Platonic-Aristotelian ontology is shown by an analysis of concepts like "truth" (*emet*) belong to the most illuminating parts of the book. The author solves the problem by interpreting the relation between God and man as an *analogia verbi* or *communicationis* which safeguards the ontological content of revelation without forgetting that the *esse* of God is totally different from the *esse* of the creatures.

Space allows only a few further remarks. With Barth, van Oyen shares the conviction that God's revelation is essentially revelation in Christ; for also the revelation which occurred to Israel is related to Christ. As to the great problem of the *theologia naturalis* he sides with his master in rejecting it absolutely. However, he corrects him by repudiating certain overstatements, as Barth's interpretation of Rom. 1:18ff. There is a revelation of God in the works of creation, as also the O.T. teaches. The interpretation of Rom. 1 would have been more convincing, especially as far as the rejection of Althaus and Brunner is concerned, had the author consulted Luther's interpretation of Romans and his treatment of the First Commandment in the Large Catechism. The whole problem of an "original revelation" remains in a certain twilight as long as there is no clear understanding of the fall, of the *status integritatis* and the *status corruptionis*. The solution of this problem again depends on our understanding of Holy Scripture. We may hope that the author will be able to answer these questions in his future dogmatics. The section on the Holy Spirit which also corrects somehow Barth's one-sidedness entitles us to such hope. There are some minor desires which might be fulfilled in future volumes. References to the schoolmen should be given in a more complete way. The terminology should be watched carefully. Thus the *assumptio* of Mary must not be called *ascensio*. We should also avoid the term "parthenogenesis," which has a definite meaning in biology, for the Virgin Birth on which, by the way, the author writes in a really theological way which would please T. Berdjajew who took so strong exception to what Brunner had to say about it. When criticising Anselm's doctrine on satisfaction we should never overlook what he has to say about God's mercy and about Christ taking our place (see p. 148): *Deus pater dicit: accipe unigenitum meum et da pro te; et ipse filius dicit: tolle me et redime te* (*Cur Deus Homo* 1. I, cap. 20). It is the sincere wish of a representative of "Lutheran Confessionalism" (see p. 90) that we soon may be able to read a work by Hendrik van Oyen in English.

HERMANN SASSE.

CALVIN AND AUGUSTINE

By Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield. Edited by Samuel G. Craig (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, Philadelphia), 1956, pp. viii-507; $4.95.

With the exception of the Appendix, this volume, the fourth in the new Warfield series, reproduces most of the collected articles which appeared in the earlier Oxford edition, *Studies in Tertullian and Augustine* (1930) and *Calvin and Calvinism* (1931). Hence the grouping is new but not incongruous, since, as Warfield frequently affirms, the teachings of the Genevan Reformer constitute a reaffirmation of the vital theological insights of the African Father. This, however, would have been more appropriately indicated if the contributions on the latter had been given priority in order of place.

Part I (with Appendix), covering two-thirds of the volume, consists of a core of three special studies on Calvin's doctrines of the Knowledge of God, God, and the Trinity, and a number of more general papers on the work, theology and influence of the Reformer — most of these were originally compiled in 1909, the occasion of the four hundredth anniversary of the birth of Calvin. This varied collection from the pen of "one of the highest authorities in all that concerns Calvinist thought" (A. Lecerf) is of great and enduring value. Space confines us to the two following observations.

Warfield regards Calvin as pre-eminently the Theologian of the Holy Spirit since his most noteworthy contribution to theological science lies in the rich development he gave to the doctrine of His work in the whole experience of salvation. The doctrine of monergistic regeneration is the hinge of his soteriology and the *Institutes,* which Warfield does not hesitate to describe as "a treatise on the work of the Holy Spirit" (p. 486), therefore opens with an application of this general doctrine in the particular doctrine of the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti,* which constitutes "the keystone of his doctrine of the knowledge of God" (p. 113). In his exposition of the operation of the Holy Spirit as being through, and not apart from, the *indicia* of divinity in the Scriptures, Warfield not surprisingly incurs the criticism of more recent, dialectically influenced interpreters of the Reformer, such as E. A. Dowey, as formulating for Calvin a doctrine contrary to Calvin by saddling his enduring contribution of the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti* with the most impermanent element of his system, the rational proofs of Scripture. The doctrine of the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti,* partly anticipated in Augustine's conception that the Scriptures can only be rightly known in the *congregatio sanctorum,* was to become the common doctrine of universal Protestantism, and is regarded by Warfield as "the true Protestant principle, superior to both the so-called formal and the so-called material principles — both of which are in point of fact but corollaries" (p. 115).

To turn to another theme: In his conception of the Trinity, Calvin was Augustinian rather than Athanasian in that his principle of construction of the Trinitarian distinctions was thought of as equalisation rather than subordination. In applying this principle more than had ever previously been done, Calvin asserts an aseity of persons in which connection his designation of the Son as *autotheos* gave place to widespread controversy. After a learned discussion of a hundred pages, Warfield concludes: "In his assertion of the *autotheotes* of the Son Calvin marks an epoch in the history of the doctrine of the Trinity. . . . By this assertion the *homoousiotes* of the Nicene Fathers at last came to its full right" (pp. 283, 4). This evaluation would be considerably qualified by L. Hodgson (he appears to have

written *The Doctrine of the Trinity* in ignorance of Warfield's important contribution) who, whilst regarding Calvin's treatment as the best of the classical expositions largely on the ground that the Reformer sees so clearly that the essence is without *principium*, yet adversely contends that the remnant of subordinationism remains in Calvin's retaining of the *principium* of the persons in the Father. However, Warfield appears to have established his conclusion that in the better formulation and commendation of the doctrine the name of Calvin is to be associated with those of Tertullian and Augustine.

Part II consists of articles on "Augustine," "Augustine and his 'Confessions,'" and "Augustine's Doctrine of Knowledge." The important paper on the Pelagian controversy has been omitted on obvious grounds of space. Warfield concurs in Harnack's judgment that the most significant thing about Augustine is that he was a reformer of Christian piety but holds that Harnack fails to exhibit a proper appreciation of the intimate relations existing between Augustine's 'evangelical' religion and his doctrine of grace. "Two children were struggling in the womb of his mind and there can be no doubt which was the child of his heart. His doctrine of the Church he had received whole from his predecessors and he gave it merely the precision and vitality which ensured its persistence. His doctrine of grace was all his own; it represented the core of his being" (p. 322). This, the essence of Augustinianism, present in principle in his earliest writings, worked itself outwards through his thought but failed to reach completion by his death. The problem of the two Augustines remained unsolved for over a thousand years, but thus he concludes: "It is Augustine who gave us the Reformation. For what was the Reformation, inwardly considered, but the triumph of Augustine's doctrine of grace over Augustine's doctrine of the Church" (p. 383). As to the related concept of authority, the supreme seat lay, with Augustine, in the fixed apostolicity of the canonical Scriptures which above tradition and the Church alone attained the high altitude of indefectible infallibility. With Melancthon, the famous declaration, "I would not believe the Gospel except I was moved by the authority of the Catholic Church," is interpreted as appealing to the historical testimony but not as asserting the sheer enactment of the Church. Here again, the Roman interpretation of Augustine, which elevated the approximate authority of the Church into the ultimate authority was rectified by the *sola scriptura* of the Reformation.

The republication of these impressive studies half a century after their first appearance is most welcome. Distinguished by erudition, insight and clarity, they make a continuing contribution to the contemporary understanding of two of the major figures in the history of Christian doctrine.

R. SWANTON.

SHORTER NOTICES

Hebrew Man, by Ludwig Köhler (S.C.M., London, 12/6). This altogether delightful book is a translation of a very easily read series of lectures. Köhler is an outstanding Semitist, to whom we owe the latest Hebrew dictionary. Yet here he writes simply on the everyday life and thought of the Hebrews in O.T. times. What did Hebrew man think about death? Did he ever notice the beauties of nature? Did he like the company of his fellows? How were his children educated? Just how much of the great prophetic religion did the ordinary, simple peasant appreciate and take in? Köhler surprises us with his age-

tables, in which he shows that a Hebrew could expect to be a great-grandfather at the age of fifty-seven, so that "to the third and fourth generation" covers a period of one man's life. Have you ever realised that when Jesus went into a solitary place to pray he was breaking through a Hebrew thought-barrier? The wilderness in O.T. times was peopled with demons and hostile spirits, so that no Hebrew would deliberately venture into the wilds alone. Our prosperous farming conditions to-day preclude us from sitting where the Hebrew peasant sat. Köhler shows us his hand-to-mouth existence, his constant fear of famine, the fact that he was often sickly from undernourishment, and probably ate only one meal a day. This book is "bedside" reading on the O.T., and is so straightforwardly expressed that it could be read and enjoyed by Sunday School teachers and Bible Class leaders as much as by any specialist.

The Book of Daniel, by E. W. Heaton. The Torch Bible Commentaries (S.C.M., 12/6). Here we have a valuable addition to the Torch series. It is long since there has been a commentary on Daniel in English, except in the one-volume Bible Commentaries. There are two great Commentaries on Daniel, both of which will stand for many years; the one is by J. A. Montgomery in the I.C.C. series, published in 1927; the other followed two years later as R. H. Charles' monumental work. But neither volume is cheap or easily handled by the working minister. Heaton has worthily put into brief compass the argument for the understanding of Daniel as a document issued to meet a terrible moment in Israel's experience. The Introduction is long for a Torch Commentary (100 pages), but short when we recognise the many problems that an expositor of Daniel must handle. The Commentary following on the twelve chapters is of sufficient detail to help the intelligent Bible reader to grasp the theological significance of Daniel over against the "prophetic" interpretations of the Sects, and for the minister to give his people a helpful series of sermons on what is the most difficult book in the O.T. to expound.

G. A. F. Knight.

An Approach to the Theology of the Sacraments, by Neville Clark. Studies in Biblical Theology, No. 17 (S.C.M., 8/-). This is the third study in the series to deal with the sacraments, and not only in its greater comprehensiveness is it the best of the three. But it suffers a great disadvantage by compression into the slender compass apparently required of these volumes. In the presentation of highly concentrated fare, the argument has often to be telescoped, and assertions too frequently appear in the place of evidence and discussion. For example, it will not do for baptism and "sealing" with the Spirit, which in the New Testament are nowhere conjoined, to be theologically correlated by the mere juxtaposition of texts (p. 34). Again, the bald statement that, "in so far as the Church is the extension of the incarnation, the sacraments are the extension of the atonement" (p. 74) unblushingly begs the question in the first four words — to say nothing of the quotation of Mersch shortly afterwards against any similar "prolongation of the Spirit" (p. 77). Nor is the careful argument of Ernest Best's book to be dismissed by a trite footnote (p. 79). These are among the blemishes, but on the positive side there is so much that is good and relevant that we are given not merely an "approach" but an incitement to further study, with trenchant and valuable criticism of previous writers as well as many constructive insights.

Galilean Christianity, by L. E. Elliott-Binns. Studies in Biblical Theology, No. 16 (S.C.M., 7/6). This study arises from the author's special interest in early Jewish Christianity. The Christian movement originated in Galilee, but with the early shifting of its centre to Jerusalem, its subsequent fortunes in Galilee were strangely neglected, not only in the early Church, but until quite recent times. In an attempt to penetrate the darkness of the period that followed our Lord's death, Canon Elliott-Binns examines contemporary conditions and the ministry of Jesus in Galilee; the significance and effects of the removal of headquarters to Jerusalem; the migration to Pella and later history. Direct evidence is hard to come by, but diligent seach has yielded many hints, though often to be qualified by "may" or "probably." There are no "irrefragable conclusions," but an array of interesting material and 'tentative hypotheses" for consideration.

Otherworldliness in the New Testament, by Amos N. Wilder (S.C.M., 7/6). In four lectures written to meet the charge that Christianity is otherworldly and escapist, Professor Wilder, of Harvard, maintains that, without minimising the transcendent dimensions of the Christian faith, God's work is also related to the secular and natural factors in human experience. The modern Church is handicapped by its false spirituality, from which he believes the newer trends in biblical scholarship may help to rescue it; the recurrent tendency to docetism is to be met by making the historical Jesus truly contemporary; and a relevant salvation is to be found only by a true interpretation of the resurrection faith. The interpretation submitted, however, lies too near to a rationalising that does not tally with the New Testament realism.

C. S. Petrie.

The Teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews, by Geerhardus Vos (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, $2.00). This volume contains the classroom lectures of the late Dr. Geerhardus Vos, of Princeton, edited and rewritten by his son, Prof. Johannes G. Vos. Dr. Vos does not debate the vexed question of authorship, but the first chapter deals with the more important question of the addressees. He disputes the popular and prevalent view that the original readers were Jews, and presents strong reasons for his conviction that they were Gentile Christians. Those who imagine that this throws away the key to the understanding of this book will be surprised to find how, under Dr. Vos's clear and unforced exegesis, much is both applicable to such readers and still relevant to-day. Of course, those who interpret the *diatheke* in terms of Jewish nationalism will still see a racial reference in the epistle, but Dr. Vos sees a wider and more spiritual aspect in this characteristic term and interprets it as a *disposition* — "a sovereign disposal of God," rather than a *covenant* in the sense of agreement. In chapter 3 the Epistle's Philosophy of Revelation and Redemption is expounded. Here the author shows how the O.T. prepares for the N.T. because it is a shadow of the heavenly reality which came to earth in Christ. The superiority of the new revelation over the old is due, he maintains, not to any defect in the old, but to the fact that God spoke finally through a Son — a term which indicates both deity and messiahship. In chapter 4 is expounded the distinctive teaching of this epistle on the significance of Christ's priesthood as foreshadowed by Melchizedek and Aaron, while the sacrifice of the new covenant is dealt with in the final chapter

where the ritual terminology is explained. This is a book which will repay careful study as it brings one in contact with the text of Scripture, and by exact scholarship draws out its true meaning.

Immortality, by Loraine Boettner (Eerdmans, $2.50). Little has been published recently by orthodox scholars on the life after death. This has left the field open for sentimentalists and spiritualists. For this reason we welcome this work by a Reformed scholar on this subject of universal concern. Dr. Boettner, who adduces rational arguments in favour of immortality, generally confines himself to an exposition of the relevant Scripture passages, giving their theological implications, with some strictures on prayers for the dead, cremation and some heresies. The study is rather incomplete in that it does not deal specifically with the resurrection and the eternal states.

W. R. McEwen.

A Theology for Christian Stewardship, by T. A. Kantonen (Muhlenberg, Philadelphia, $2.00). In view of the moralism and legalism frequently attendant upon the contemporary movement, the writer endeavours to present "an interpretation of the Christian meaning of life as a whole" (p. 2). After analysing the N.T. concept of *oikonomia,* in which the original sense of the status of hired servant is transformed into that of God's children, the heart and soul of Christian stewardship is found in the gospel by which the Church lives in which "the *Gabe* always precedes the *Aufgabe.* The gift comes first and only after that the task" (p. 91). This excellent exposition of Christian stewardship as "faith in action" (p. 90) by a Lutheran theologian with the dynamic insights of the evangelical heritage, provides a very necessary corrective to present-day appeal, the target of which is so often "the enlightened self-interest of unregenerate human nature" (p. 6).

East is East, by Peter Fingesten (Muhlenberg, $3.00). In view of the concurrence of many Western writers with India's contemporary bid for spiritual leadership, this book offers "a critical analysis and evaluation of the Hindu-Buddhist world-view versus the Western Judeo-Christian world-view" (x). The well-informed discussion with its valuable documentation from the sacred books of the East concludes that India's traditional pessemism and negation, with its utter disregard of social problems and human sufferings until recent times, is markedly inferior to the fundamental values of European culture which are based upon "Judeo-Christian ethics, Roman law, and Greek objectivity" (p. 166).

The Times Test the Church, by Frederick K. Wentz (Muhlenberg, $1.95). The position of the Church to-day is here defined as that of an emerging world-wide minority fellowship facing aggressive counter-faiths and indifferent secular blocks. The second half of the volume focuses on the crucial American scene where the marked decline in the influence of its traditional Protestantism in face of modern mass society has recently given place to a rising religiosity which, if largely superficial, nevertheless has a deeper meaning as revealing a sense of need. Whether the Churches in America and elsewhere can meet the challenge of this time of tremendous potentiality depends on their renewal by the Gospel. This brief but comprehensive survey, to which Dr. Kenneth Scott Latourette contributes a Foreword, concludes with

the adducing of evidence, in this setting of urgency, of the Church's renewal at what are considered several significant points, in the forefront of which is rightly placed the rebirth of theology.

The Old Testament in Modern Research, by Herbert F. Hahn (S.C.M., 16/6). This volume, reviewed in its American edition by Professor G. A. F. Knight (Vol. XIV, No. 2), was there described as "a fascinating story . . . of value even if it is used as a bibliography alone."

The Early Church, by Oscar Cullmann (S.C.M., 25/-). This consists of a miscellaneous collection of ten studies, commencing with "The Necessity and Function of Higher Criticism" and concluding with "Early Christianity and Civilisation." All, written with the writer's customary lucidity, are of considerable interest. Thus in "The Origin of Christmas" it is contended that although the change in the date of observance in the fourth century from 6th January to 25th December was probably made through the syncretism of Constantine, who intended to combine the worship of the sun and Christ, yet the determining factor was the dogmatic development of Christology seeking removal from a date associated with the heretical view that Jesus was adopted by God at His baptism. Also here, but especially in the two lengthy contributions on Biblical theology. "The Kingship of Christ and the Church in the New Testament" and "The Return of Christ," there is evident a marked emphasis on Christ as cosmic Mediator and Lord. The longest contribution on "Tradition" is of outstanding value as a contemporary Protestant contribution to this crucial subject. A lengthy review of this important study in its German edition (Zwingli-Verlag, Zürich, 1954) by Dr. H. H. Rex in this Journal (Vol. xiii, No. 3) concluded thus: "Nobody who is interested in the subject can afford to ignore this book, and he will feel richly rewarded by reading it." The editor, and translation supervisor, Dr. A. J. B. Higgins, has rendered a real service in making especially this brochure (originally published in French) as also the other papers available in English.

R. Swanton.

BOOKS RECEIVED

(Mention here neither precludes nor implies subsequent comment.)

Basil Blackwell, Oxford: *For Faith and Freedom*, Leonard Hodgson, 34/9 (Aust.).

Christian Press, Sydney: *The Sinner and His Substitute*, D. A. Langford, 2/3.

Eerdmans, Grand Rapids: *The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth*, C. G. Berkouwer, $4.95; *Our Reasonable Faith*, Herman Bavinck, $6.95; *The Perfect Prayer*, Herman Hoeksema, $3.00; *Man of Sorrows*, H. Hoeksema, $2.00.

Independent Press, London: *Messages from the Parables*, C. A. Glover, 8/6; *At the House of the Interpreter*, Roderick Dunkerley, 6/-; *Steps in Bible Drama*, Robert Duce, 6/-; *What about Church Membership;* D. H. Stockwell, 5/-; *In the Beginning*, Roger Pilkington, 5/-.

Inter-Varsity Fellowship, London: *Mission Fields Today*, A. J. Dain, 4/-; *Some Modern Religions*, J. O. Sanders and J. S. Wright, 2/-; *The Christian Approach to the Old Testament*, F. F. Bruce, 6d.

Macmillan, London: *The Revolution in Philosophy*, Various Contributors, 17/6 (Aust.); *The Cross of Christ*, Vincent Taylor, 17/6 (Aust.).

Muhlenberg, Philadelphia: *The Moment Before God,* M. J. Heinecken, $5.95; *Counselling and Theology,* W. E. Hulme, $3.75; *To Enjoy God,* R. M. Berry, $3.50; *The Church and the Public Conscience,* E. M. Carlson, $1.75; *Hinges of Destiny,* R. W. Loew, $2.75; *Put Your Faith to Work,* K. H. A. Rest, $2.75.

Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh: *Kingdom and Church,* T. F. Torrance, 16/-; *Christ and Adam,* Karl Barth, 6/-.

Oxford University Press, London: *Economic Problems of the Church from Archbishop Whitgift to the Long Parliament,* Christopher Hill, 68/- (Aust.); *Muhammad at Medina,* W. Montgomery Watt, 68/- (Aust.); *The Idea of Revelation in Recent Thought,* John Baillie, 25/- (Aust.); *Saint Peter,* 17/6 (Aust.); *The Early Christian Fathers,* Henry Bettenson, 26/6 (Aust.); *The True Mistery of the Nativity,* 8/6 (Aust.); *Principalities and Powers,* G. B. Caird, 25/- (Aust.).

Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia: *Do You Believe?,* E. J. Young, $0.25; *Are You a Christian?* L. R. Eyres, $0.25; *A Message to Thoughtful Inquirers,* H. W. Coray, $0.15; *Are You a Biblical Baptist?,* G. W. Marston, $0.15; *The Ordained Lampstand,* E. E. Elliott, $0.10; *Confessing Christ,* C. K. Cummings, $0.30.

Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., Philadelphia: *Voices from Heaven and Hell,* J. M. Kik; *What Presbyterians Believe,* G. H. Clark.

S.C.M., London: *The Faith of Israel,* H. H. Rowley, 18/-; *The Seige Perilous,* S. H. Hooke, 21/-; *Early Israel in Recent History,* John Bright, 9/6; *The Messiah in the Old Testament,* Helmer Ringgern, 7/6; *Christian Essays in Psychiatry,* Philip Mairet, Ed., 15/-; *The New Being,* Paul Tillich, 10/6; *The Renewal of the Church,* W. A. Visser't Hooft, 12/6; *Christian Belief and This World,* A. R. Vidler, 12/6; *Letters on Pacifism,* John Ferguson and Ian Pitt-Watson, 3/6; *Nineveh and the Old Testament,* Andre Parrot, 8/6; *St. Paul's Journeys in the Greek Orient,* Henri Metzger, 8/6; *The Reformed Pastor,* Richard Baxter, 8/6.

S.P.C.K., London: *The High Church Party,* George Every, 30/-; *Current Problems of the Church,* A. E. J. Rawlinson, 5/-.

Tyndale, London: *James,* R. V. G. Tasker, 7/6; *Thessalonians,* Leon Morris, 7/6; *The Pastoral Epistles and the Mind of Paul,* Donald Guthrie, 1/6; *The Evangelical Doctrine of Law,* E. F. Kevan, 1/6.

Zwingli, Zürich: *Die politischen Voraussagen der Propheten,* Ernst Jenni, Fr.14.50; *Der Christliche Existenzialismus Gabriel Marcels,* Friedrich Hoereld; *Das Geshictsverstaendnis des Markus-Evangeliums,* J. M. Robinson; *Hamann-Studien,* Fritz Blanke.

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